SHAKER COLLECTION

Item 5

Correspondence dated 1832, 1851, and 1881 of William Deming, Benjamin S. Youngs, and others, from Pittsfield, Mass., and Enfield, Conn.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

TO : Chief, Exchange and Gift Division DATE:

FROM : Chief, Manuscript Division

SUBJECT: Disposition of material inappropriate to the collections of the Manuscript Division

Transferred herewith are the items described below which are to be:

☐ Returned to the donor

☐ Transferred to appropriate custodial division of LC

☐ Disposed of by Exchange and Gift Division

Material:

Donor's name and address

Manuscript Division's Accession Number[s]

Comments:

cc: Accessioner
cc: Reference Department

David C. Mearns
Chief
Manuscript Division

77-25 (rev 3/62)

BUY U.S. SAVINGS BONDS THROUGH THE PAYROLL PLAN

Copy of a letter for Elder Benjamin S Youngs

Pittsfield Mass. Jan. 8th 1832.

Beloved friends, Elder Benjamin, Eldress Molly, & those with you in your gospel labour.

I think by this time you would like to hear from your Gospel friends in the east. so I will try to give you in short the most satisfactory information that I am able. Firstly, as our increase & prosperity in the work of the gospel is of all things the most important to all of us - yea & the most comforting to every true Believer. - I will for your comfort & the encouragement of those with whom your labours fall you, the gospel work is increasing in this place. Not that I would be understood there is a great gathering in of young Believers - for the increase in numbers is small & gradual. - But the real work of gospel purity - life & love to the way of God does increase & I believe ever will to the downfall of every thing that is contrary to God & godliness - And every one will receive according as their works shall be - Then what a meeting we view on before - where all that have faithfully bore their cross & subdued the passions of nature & can have it said to them well done good & faithful servant enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Then shall our hearts be freed from sorrow & our eyes from tears. All such can join & joy & rejoice together in gospel love & purity - singing praises to God for his mercies & for their deliverance from the bondage of sin & death. The only death that a true zion traveller has cause to fear - For tho the dissolution of this body must come; what is it but the falling of the leaf & the withering of the grass to the soul who has made their peace with God. & finished their work faithfully in this world. All such can leave this world in peace as our good Father Job Bishop of late has done - He has finished his work we all believe in faithfulness & has gone to the mansions of rest. He departed Dec 5th Aged 71. The particulars of his death we expect you have heard before this. Also in this place our good Brother Silas Holden departed Dec 15th Aged 61. At Enfield Joseph Fairbanks sen. Aged 76. Also a young Sister Susan Granger Aged 19 with the consumption. In respect to her leaving this world it was wonderful to all conversant with her in her last days & hours to see with what confidence & composure she was about to leave the world. She often warned her companions to be faithful & keep the way of God. often did she say. be faithful & keep the way

of God for it will feel of all things the most precious to you when you are placed in my situation. I do not feel that I can be thankful enough for the blessed way of God. In this frame of mind she continued till she left this world.

We have had an uncommon fall & winter. From the 20th of Nov, we have had snow in a bundance attended with severe cold wether. The Thermometer has stood for many days from 5 to 10 degrees below zero. There has been but few days from Nov 20th till now that has thawed on the south side of the buildings. The severity of the weather causes extreme colds & influenzes with some fevers. As to the health of the Ministry they have had hard colds of which they have not yet recovered. Eldress Dana is feeble & is attended with a very hard cough & raises like one in a consumption but we hope she will continue a while yet with us, for we do not feel able to part with her at the present.

Now Elder Benjamin, in compliance to thy request I will try to give you a description of our new house. We began laying the foundation on the 15 of April 1830. With the materials as follows. 2326. feet of white hewn stone 30 cts per foot. This includes the underpining, belting, window caps & sils. water table & door posts. In addition to this 565 feet of blue lime stone that we sawed and cut ourselves for the basement story at the south end of the house which forms the out side walls of the cook room. Also 330 feet of blue lime stone sawed 6 inches thick with the sawed edges out this is placed under the underpining. Also about 300 & 50 thousand brick, with these materials & stone for the cellar walls we commenced our building & in 10 weeks from the placing the first stone in the cellar, the house was neatly laid up & the roof put on. 1 week we were hindred for want of some materials. The work is all well done. There is none to excede it in this country. And the same can be said of the joiner work, the stuff is verry clear scarcely a knot can be seen in all the work, except in the flowers & they are yellow pine & verry good. There is 100 large doors including out side & closet doors. 245 cupboard doors. 369 drawers. These are placed in the corners of the rooms & by the sides of the chimneys, so they take up but little room nor are they to be cleaned under. There are 95-24 lighted windows. 15-20 lighted ditto 6-21 lighted ditto. 4-12 lighted ditto. 4-6 lights 12 by 12. Those are placed on the roof. Also there is 18-8 lighted cellar windows in all 394. squares of glass including inside & out. The meeting room is on the North end of the house & is 61 by 22 with two partitions which forms the hall. Part of which swings back & shuts across the hall & the —

ther part runs up betwn the upper walls, so that the floor is one smooth space without any thresholds. The dining room is at the south end. With accomodations for 50 to sit down at one time. The victuals is conveyed up into the dining room by means of 2 sliding cupboards. The Ministry has a neat little dining room adjoining the large one. The cook room is very convenient, We have excelent water from a never failing spring that is conveyed into the cook room in 3 different places & 2 places in the loft above. There is 2 excelent ovens made on an improved plan which will bake 4 different settings, at one healing. Also the arch kettles are on a new plan of my own invention & which prove to be the best ever seen about here. The steam is conveyed off as follows, about ¼ of the kettle is covered with a castiron plate fastend to the back part of the kettle a hole is made in this plate & a tube in form of a gun barrel 2 & a half feet long passes from this into the chimney & the remainder of the kettle is covered with a sheet iron cover hung to the plate upon the back part of the kettle. The house is convened with 7 good stone Sinks and I think we may it is finished from the top to the bottom. Handsomly stained inside with a light Orange color. The drawers are faced with butternut & handsomely stained. The out side of the house is painted with 4 coats of a beautiful red. The out side doors are green. The plastering is covered with a coat of hard finish & is a beautiful white. The upper garret is done off with large shelves for bedding. The 2nd loft of garrets is done off with 4 large rooms, 6 large clothes presses, with a hall that runs East & west & closes from North to south. & 2 back rooms that extend the whole length of the house. 3rd loft there is 10 rooms with closets adjoining each. The halls are all similar running from East to west & from north to south. The stairs are placed in the cross hall begining on the out side & leading in towards the centre with a continued railing from the first loft to the garret. The 2nd loft has 10 rooms with closets. The porch comes into the 2nd hall upon the south end. & a flight of stairs extends from this loft to the kitchen. The lower loft has 4 good rooms one side of the Meeting rooms Dining rooms & Closets. The Kitchen is 49 by 50. with 3 small rooms for butterys &c. Now Elder Benjamin I suppose you will think I wonder what the expenses of all this might be. Well this is rather hard to come at but I will try to give you a little idea. We have found all the materials such as sand, lime, stone &c. with all the timber except the floor boards, made all the windows, doors, cupboards & drawers, hung them & put on the trimming. The cupboards are fastened with brass spiral Spring latches. With all this & a great deal more that we have done ourselves the out expenses are about 5000. Dollars. The whole work has been performed in the space of 19 months, With the addition of 3000 Dollars worth of iron pipes

which have been brought from Philadelphia & neatly laid to convey the water to our machine house. In addition to this we have spent about 400 dollars for lead pipes to convey the water to the kitchen which is about 200 rods. Now Elder Benjamin I think by the time you have read all my broken scrawl you will think our purse is pretty empty, which in truth is the case. But as we have received in obedience to our good Mother Anns words so we expect to receive. Her precious words were these, "your hands to work & your hearts to God & a blessing will attend you" This we have found true. One thing I can assure you Dear friends we have had no time to be idle since we began the House neither Brethren nor Sisters. And as to my self in addition to all my common concerns I have headed & assisted in the building of the whole House, in both the mason & joiner work. And one thing more (if your eyes will hold out to read a little longer) I will tell you when we moved into the new house. Our first meeting was on the 20th of Nov, & a lovely meeting we had. The Ministry all attended with us. We began to move in on the 22nd of Nov. there is near 100 members well convened & there might be more as to the room & conveniences in the House.

Now Elder Benjamin I have one request to make of the. That is be so kind as to write to me as soon as convenient after receiving this. & tell me all that you think, will be interesting to me. (I should be glad to hear how they are getting along at Pleasant Hill &c.) With this be so kind as to accept, of my best love & blessing, Wishing you prosperity in all things spiritual & temporal. Those in the same lot with me, wish to unite in sending their best love & blessing.

From your true friend William Deming,

P.S. The Brethren & Sisters unitedly with uplifted hands send their best love & fervant good wishes to all their Gospel friends at South Union. Not forgetting good Brothers Mather & Elie; with little Sister Prudence Be these be so kind as to give my particular love. & to all the rest of my good friends. both those that I have seen & those that I have not seen. Tell them I wish them all the comfort that Heaven & Earth can afford in the Gospel. Our good Deacon. Says tell them Daniel sends his love. & Benjamins Brethren.

W. D.

City of Enfield Peace April 9th 1851.

Beloved Elders,

We will give you a short sketch of a trying scene we was driven to pass through yesterday the 8th And which is not yet closed.

Last Monday the 7th while the Church family were at dinner, there was loud weeping heard, attended with sobs and groans. This more than half of the family heard Sonar left the Dining room to search for the cause. But none could be found. It appeared to be in the dining room, and yet it could be heard in the third loft. Tuesday morn, just 24 hours from this time, all was explained. While we were all at dinner Johns Irving and the Sheriff with Johns daughter for their pilot, rushed into the dining room and seized two of our dear children, (Johns daughters) And such a time was never witnessed by any of us. The girls screached, beged and cried with all their might, at the same time clinging to the Sisters with deth like grasps, crying do O do, do help me, I cannot go I had rather dies O Father, father, how can you cause your children to feel such trouble. You brought us here and you bound us here, and promised you would never take us away. And now you will do it. O! you will have to suffer for it after you die, you dont know how much. At this time the children with

many of the Sisters, were weeping aloud. The girls were good girls and much beloved by all. The eldest was 13 last September, the other 9 last October. The Sheriff was surprised to hear them talk, and to see their love for their home and their friends here.

As resistance was out of the case, we did all in our power by pleading, entreating and perswading, but all to no purpose they forcibly took the children, and they went screaching, and screeming through the village. This cruel scene lasted 3/4 of an hour. After the Sheriff got to Pittsfield he said he would not go through another such a scene for 50 dollars. Elder Beebee with Br Joseph Patten followed them on to Pittsfield to learn what they could do, and as it was Town meeting day, they could do but little. Wednesday morning they was there in season and took out a Writ of Replevin, and about 6 o'clock P.M. the Sheriff, (the same one who took the Girls away) brought the Girls back, & gave them up, & it appeard that he was much pleased to perform this last act.

So what the wicked will try to do next we cannot tell

Be so kind as to accept with the lines a large portion of our best love & well wishes for your prosperity.

Ministry.

N.B. Br Harvey will be able to give a more particular account of the late disturbance.

Enfield Conn. Aug 11. 1843.

Beloved Elders

We received your letter on the 8 instant and agreeable to your request we write a few lines concerning the girl of whom you speak. She came to our family on the 23 of January. 1847. a very cold day, and she very thinly clad. She called her name Ellen Mareah Druskill. said she was born in England, and was an only child. that she came to America with her Parents, when she was between the age of 7 and 8 years. that she had not been in this country 2 years when both her Parents died, her Mother of Consumption, and her Father withe the fever. that she was left an orphan, with no kind of natural relation this side of the Atlantic. That her age then was 14 on the 25 of December past. She said she came from Boston on purpose to join the Shakers, being advised so to do by one turn off, from this society whom she had recently been living with. Name Mary Billings (the girl we remember.) On her way from Boston here she stopped in Springfield, Mass and stayed 1 week. We took pains to call on the man, to learn something more of the girl. He said there had been a girl there of ~~our~~ that description who had left to go to the Shakers but she called her name Ellen Patterson. that she told so many strange stories, he did not like to have her with his children and was glad to have her go. We also took pains to write to the woman she lived with in Boston, but never received any answer.

She being so destitute of freend, we let her stay awhele to prove herself. but before she had been here 3 monthe she proved herself to be a great liar. at length she got offended with the sister who took care of her about some trifling notion, and took to her heels before any other one in the family knewe she was going. as for presents she did not care to take many. but went nearly as destitute as she came, and in a great hurry. If her Father came after her, he was invisible to all but herself, certain Her stay here was about 3 monthe, which was the only time she ever stayed with us over night. But we have seen her pass in the street on foot, and alone, several times since she left. While here she had many strange operations, and a number of hysteric fits. upon the whole tho she made a great deal of noise and disturbance in the family so much so that we could not mourn when she took her departure But if you can make a good believer of her, we have no objections, yet we thinks there is not much hopes.

She said her Mothers name before she was married was E Patterson. that she left her trunk containing her best clothes and 10 dollars in money. ~~in Boston~~ with the woman she lived with in Boston to be kept till called for.

As she understood you were writing here for information, we think probable she will be off before you receive this.

We should like to know how the matter comes out.

With this I receive ye a portion of our best love

To Elder Sister Nancy and those with her in the Eldership. Harvard Mass.

SHAKER COLLECTION

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